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ABSTRACT

The research project has been funded by the Swedish National Board of Education (NBE) since 1983 and will be formally concluded and reported on in 1987 and 1988. This project forms parts of the NBE's work on the teaching of science and social subjects in compulsory school and is to include the analysis and testing of the feasibility of integrating these subjects. The project seeks to view and analyze in theoretical and didactic terms the teaching of social subjects in Swedish schools. Additionally, the project will examine the curriculum and teaching materials as a reflection of citizenship and political education. This report contains the following sections: (1) background to the project; (2) gains made; (3) research under the project; (4) international ramifications; (5) some notes on curricular theory and didactics; and (6) the anticipated date of the final report. Forty-six references conclude the document. (BZ)

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TITLE OF PROJECT: POLITICAL AND CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION IN SWEDISH SCHOOLS IN THE 20TH CENTURY (THE ROLE AND CONCEPT FORMATION OF SOCIAL SUBJECTS)

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This project is an attempt, in terms of curricular theory, to view and analyse in theoretical and didactic terms the teaching of social subjects in Swedish schools, as reflected by curricular and teaching materials, as a reflection of citizenship and political education in schools.

The analyses focus particularly on the efforts now being made to build up subject content from central concepts and to develop an interdisciplinary working approach which can then be combined with various perspectives of educational philosophy.

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1986:6 Political and citizenship education in Swedish schools in the 20th century (the role and concept formation of social subjects)

The research project "Political and citizenship education in Swedish schools in the 20th century" (Polmed) has been funded by the NBE since 1st July 1983 and will be formally concluded this year. Final reporting is expected to take place this year and next year (see also under the heading "Anticipated final reporting date"). This project forms part of the NBE's work on the teaching of science and social subjects in compulsory school, which, according to the Government remit (25th November 1982), is to include analysis and testing of the feasibility of integrating these subjects. With this background in mind, the project has the following aims: in terms of curricular theory, to view and analyse in theoretical and didactic terms the teaching of social subjects in Swedish schools, as reflected by curricular and teaching materials, as a reflection of citizenship and political education in schools. The following means are being employed to this end:

1. Development of an integrated theoretical approach to citizenship and political education in schools, focusing specifically on social subjects.
2. Based on this theoretical approach, a systematic analysis of this teaching in the history of Swedish education.
3. Drafting of guidelines for a democratic conception of social studies - social studies as political education.
4. Presentation, in a comparative perspective, of various principles and didactic aspects of the conditions attaching to social studies.

BACKGROUND TO THE PROJECT - PREVIOUS PROJECTS

Under the "Curricular Theory" project (1979-), the leader of the current project evolved research focusing on citizenship education and social studies in schools in terms of curricular theory and educational history. The gradual development and results of that research are described primarily in conference reports from the project, but also in several other contexts (see references). The Curricular Theory project, which was originally planned to continue full-scale up to and including 1984, was to a great extent wound up in 1983, and in this connection the above mentioned research was transferred to the Polmed project. Thus the first two purposes of this project constitute a

direct continuation of previous project work and have been reported (see p. 1, above) in "Curriculum as a political problem" Studentlitteratur 1986, and see p. 2 above) "Samhällsorientering och medborgarfostran i svensk skola under 1900-talet" (up to and including 1982) Pedagogisk Forskning i Uppsala no. 65-66.

BACKGROUND TO THE PROJECT - INTENTIONS OF EDUCATIONAL POLICY

In the 1980 Elementary School Curriculum (Lgr 80), we read that "Compulsory school is a part of society. Its curriculum reflects the social and human attitudes of democracy: man is an active, creative being, he both can and must assume responsibility and seek knowledge in order, together with others, to understand and improve his own living conditions and those of his fellow beings. The content and working methods of school must be designed in such a way as to promote this view of man and society" (Lgr 80, Goals and guidelines, p. 13). In the syllabus for social subjects, moreover, we read: "Social studies in schools have a special part to play in educating pupils as members of a democratic society" (Lgr 80, Syllabi, Goals of Social Subjects, p. 119).

The goal of democratic education is enlarged on in Lgr 80 and related documents through the following:

(1) The demand, expressed in Government Bill Prop. 1978/79:180 and Lgr 80, for the construction of subject content with reference to central concepts and contexts into which the pupils must gain an insight.

(2) The demand, expressed in Government Bill Prop. 1978/79:180 and Lgr 80, that school and society must not be described as harmonious and free from conflicts, and that pupils should "be made to realise that it has been and is possible to alter prevailing conditions".

(3) The demand, expressed in Government Bill Prop. 1978/79:180 and Lgr 80, and the Government remit to the NBE for an interdisciplinary approach to the teaching of general subjects.

The anticipated effect of this project is primarily the creation, through problem-oriented cognitive production relating to these specific demands, of better opportunities for adopting a standpoint concerning the future teaching of social subjects in compulsory school.

RESULTS GAINED HITHERTO

Central results/insights which will also be dealt with at greater length in the final reports on the project have, for example, included a concept of the curriculum as a political compromise. Both at the formulation stage and as regards its realisation, it is obvious that the curriculum as a document, ever since comprehensive elementary education took shape and the writing of curricula was made subject to the democratic process, has been amenable to interpretation in a specific way. At the same time as the curriculum legitimises a "rational attitude" it can be given concrete interpretations presenting a wide spectrum of political views and educational philosophies. Thus the curriculum is not an unambiguous document but consists of frequently contradictory elements which can be interpreted from a variety of political and educational-philosophical viewpoints. An arsenal of educational philosophy (with an American background), comprising reform pedagogics, progressivism, essentialism, perennialism and reconstructivism, has been developed with a view to specifying more closely the import of various traditions of curricular interpretation. Despite the ever-present scope for interpretation (interpretation of the curriculum as a steering document), the curriculum can also be integrated with underlying and more or less dominant trains of thought - reflections of the overall societal "climate" - indicating the outer limits on the interpretation of the curriculum at different periods of time. Analysis focusing primarily on citizenship education and social studies in schools, with reference to "educational conceptions", has revealed three distinct conceptions of this kind - patriarchal, scientific-rational and democratic - in Swedish educational history. In connection

with the special analysis of civics knowledge/civics and history undertaken in the course of this project, "didactive typologies"/instructional typologies have been launched for these subjects. The origin, application and further development of these didactic typologies have already been presented in several reports, and here we can particularly mention the way in which the analysis of civics teaching materials has been linked up with the didactic typology of civics (originally devised for "social studies" in the USA).

RESEARCH UNDER THE PROJECT - DIDACTICS OF SOCIAL STUDIES

Continuing research within this project has thus followed on from the Curricular Theory project and the intentions of educational policy. Among other things this research is an atttempt to identify the implications of the above mentioned intentions of educational policy in relation to various perspectives of educational philosophy. In the process, the project contrasts, in an analytical sense, the previously dominant aspirations - essentialist (strictly subject-based) and progressivist (pupil-centred) with the relatively prominent reconstructivist aspirations (in terms of content, goal-related - focusing on the future civic role) and tries to indicate the conceivable concrete consequences of the latter alternative (see point 3, p. 1), in terms of concrete course content, central concepts etc.

No integrated account has yet been prepared. Instead the analyses have so far been noted in working reports, e.g. nos. 79, 82 and 86, and unpublished MSS. Very briefly, it is history and civics as school subjects which occupy the focal point of attention as potentially politically educative subjects.

Report 86 presents a concrete scheme of organisation for social studies at the senior level of compulsory school with reference to the above mentioned elucidations. This dispenses with the traditionally fragmentary structure of main teaching elements. Briefly, it is proposed that grade 7 should study a "Young today" section of "relatively large extent, with detailed consideration of such fields as interpersonal and other relationships, human rights, rights and obligations, law and

justice, drug and alcohol abuse, questions of belief, and the origins of norms and values. The other, more subject-based field proposed for study in grade 7 is a presentation of history and geography in the sense of these subjects primarily presenting each subject's central concepts and the overall context in which it can be studied and is motivated. The focus of attention in grade 8 is on the international community, and here a natural integration of social subjects is proposed by giving prominence to project work. In grade 9, finally, the focus of attention is on the pupils' own Swedish society and, especially, on its recent history.

A closer definition of (social) political education in schools has been developed on the basis of an assignment from the Schools Group of the Advisory Committee on Democracy, and especially one sentence in its terms of reference: "The Advisory Committee should also illustrate ways in which the question of the democratic system of society and the basic values, principles and various forms of democracy can be given more prominence in teaching". The result of this assignment, which has been presented in a working report (108) and constitutes the foundation of a chapter in the Schools Group's report "School for Participation", highlights such basic principles as pluralism and a critical attitude to institutions as a part of preparatory civic political education. The primary aim of the educational model outlined is to "enhance the political competence of the rising civic generation for subsequently adopting standpoints on fundamental issues concerning the organisation of society, based partly on a knowledge of the tenets of different ideologies/political parties".

In keeping with the introductory description, a fourth aim of research under the project is to investigate and compare social studies in other countries, insofar as those studies accord with the present aims of the Swedish school system. This, however, raises two fundamental problems, which in turn have opened up new fields of knowledge: (1) The way in which the Swedish curriculum can be interpreted in terms of educational philosophy, and the ways in which such aspirations of central concepts/integration have been rooted in educational philosophy and put into practical effect in other countries; (2) The "workings" of curricula

and teaching-material models, socially (i.e. in relation to public opinion and the debate on schools) and in the school community in various nations. Obviously, efforts to integrate general subjects and build up their content with reference to central concepts cannot be analysed solely as problems of teaching method but are to a very great extent concerned with curricular theory/didactics, and are ultimately swayed by societal conditions. A final report is planned to contain an analysis of developments in Sweden during the 1980s in "case-study" form.

INTERNATIONAL RAMIFICATIONS

International research, primarily American but also British, European and Australian, has provided important sources of inspiration in developing the systematisation of various ways of conducting citizenship education within an institutionalised education system constituted by the three educational conceptions mentioned previously. It is also in the perspective of international research that the alternative of the democratic conception - social studies as political education - has been developed.

In the field of curricular theory, the main reference has been to "the reconceptualisation of curriculum", which is above all associated with such names as Michael Apple, Jean Anyon, Cleo Cherryholmes, Henry Giroux, Thomas Popkewitz in the USA and, in the UK, Geoff Whitty.

Concerning analyses of social studies and citizenship education in historical and theoretical perspectives mention should be made of the following names from the USA: Robert Barr, James Barth, Samuel Shermis, Murray Nelson, Keiran Egan, Freeman Butts, Frances Fitzgerald, Hazel Hertzberg and Catherine Cornbleth. And from the UK Ted Tapper and Brian Salter.

As regards the focus on social subjects as political education, we have the following names: James Shaver, Susanne Helburn, Fred Newmann, Lawrence Kohlberg, George Wood, James Giarelli, Judith Gillespie and

Mary Jean Turner from the USA, and, from the UK, Tom Brennan, Bernard Crick, Ian Lister, Alex Porter, Derek Heater and Ted Cohn.

In the field of educational philosophy, inspiration has for example been derived from Peter Carbone, Elmer Winters, Carl Bowers and William Stanley. These have above all been consulted on the reconstructivist philosophy of education. Special mention must also be made of Jonas Soltis.

Finally, in the field of curricular history, we have Barry Franklin, Stephen Hazlett, Laurel Tanner and Arthur Wirth.

There is, of course, a great deal of overlap between these fields, and the "positioning" of the various names makes no claim to precision but is merely an indication of direction. More exhaustive references to the persons mentioned here, except for the very latest contributions, will above all be found in "Curriculum as a Political Problem". Other current articles and books referring to parts of this research field - its potentialities, limitations and "research front" - include, for example, Apple (1985), Butts (1983), Cherryholmes (1983), Cohn (1983), Giarelli (1982), Gilbert (1985), Giroux (1984), Newmann (1985), Stanley (1984, 1985), Wood (1985) and the journal Educational Review's feature issue on political education, No. 2, 1984.

SOME NOTES ON CURRICULAR THEORY AND DIDACTICS

As has already been made clear, the research on the didactics of social studies presented here can be most aptly described as social-scientific with a powerful historical emphasis, and relatively little concerned with pedagogics and methods in the narrow sense. Although this latter aspect must not/cannot be neglected, it is clear that the problems brought into focus by this research (like many other "school problems", in fact) should be analysed in a broad perspective of historical and social science. In other words, every didactic analysis should include an element of curricular theory: "The consequences of the curricular-theory perspective for the cognitive production related to a particular field of content mean that attention is made to focus on questions as

to why a particular content has been made the subject of teaching in the first place, as well as the place, character and status accorded to that content and the scope allowed for different interpretations of it. A curricular-theory approach also prompts questions concerning pupils' differing abilities to meet subject content, by viewing their perception of subject content to their social background. All in all, a didactic perspective rooted in curricular theory means relating the teaching and learning process in school to an historical and societal context". (Englund in Englund & Svingby 1986, p. 101).

ANTICIPATED DATE OF FINAL REPORT

Under this project, the study of social studies and citizenship education which began in the previous curricular-theory project is being continued and completed in a theoretical perspective and in a systematic description in terms of educational history. This is being reported in "Curriculum as a Political Problem", Studentlitteratur februari 1986 and "Samhällsorientering och medborgarfostran i svensk skola under 1900-talet Pedagogisk forskning Uppsala vol. 65-66 February 1986. The alternatives of the democratic conception, social studies as political education, the foundations of which have been developed in several of the works mentioned previously and, in some respects, refined in working reports nos. 79, 82, 86 and 108, will be summarised in a work entitled "The didactics of social studies".

An account of the subsequent course of events is being planned in conjunction with a previous account of social studies and citizenship education in Swedish schools during the 20th century (up to and including 1982). Special attention will here be paid to the implementation and interpretation of Lgr 80, the handling of the Government's remit to the NBE concerning an interdisciplinary working approach (in which connection the author of this report served with a research group affiliated to the NBE), and the development of upper secondary schooling following the report of the Upper Secondary Schools Commission, the work of the Syllabus Group (on the teaching of civics) and the work of the Review Commission.

Current plans also include a general sketch of the central concepts of social subjects, with particular reference to the question of selection.

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